

OUR COWICHAN COMMUNITIES HEALTH NETWORK

YEAR END REPORT 2024



TABLE of CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	03
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	04
2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS	05
2024 SMALL GRANTS	14
OUR IMPACT BEYOND DATA	15
CONTRIBUTIONS AND IN-KIND SERVICES	16
2024 FINANCIALS	17
PARTNERSHIPS	18



Connected in health.

Our Cowichan -Facilitating Connections for Good Health Connected in Health

Our Cowichan Communities Health Network is a locally formed group of individuals and organizations representing the diverse peoples of the Cowichan Communities. Network members strive to optimize the health and wellbeing of all citizens in the Cowichan Region by:

- Exploring issues related to health
- Identifying concerns that can either improve or impede achieving optimum health
- Planning actions that enhance our quality of life through education, healthy living, health care and health services delivery
- Ensuring the community's voice is heard on matters related to health and wellness.

We are guided in our work by the World Health Organization's 12 Determinants of Health and research related to the determinants of health within the region.

For good health, people need more than good health care: they need adequate income, employment, education, social connections and healthy places to live. In fact, all 12 Determinants interact and affect health.

By considering the whole picture and working together, all citizens of the Cowichan communities can enjoy improved health.

Our Cowichan Welcomes You.

Contact

Regional Facilitator Cindy Lise
cindylisecchn@shaw.ca or call 250-709-5062
www.ourcchn.ca

Co-Chair- Bob Day bobkday@live.ca

Co-Chair- Jennifer Jones Jennifer.Jones6@islandhealth.ca

Co-Chair- Sheila Service sershe@shaw.ca

Leadership Team: Anita McLeod, Catharine Berghuis, Elizabeth Croft,
Valerie Nicol, Denise Williams

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The impact of years of relationship building and partnerships that are manifested throughout the region and our ability to be innovative and creative continues to remind us what can be accomplished when working together. Now completing our fourteenth year together it is evident, that given time transformations are possible. This was another year to build on the momentum and sustain our efforts in existing initiatives and projects while developing new opportunities. Here are our key accomplishments in 2024:

- 3- year service contract with Island Health increases capacity
- Regional Facilitator able to participate in United Way Public Policy Institute with 6 months of extensive public policy training to better help guide community efforts
- Cowichan reunites and reinvigorates collective impact across the region
- EPIC (Eldercare Partnership in Cowichan) in partnership with Island Health undertakes extensive regional collective impact falls prevention campaign
- Cowichan becomes second community in BC to pilot a Youth Emergency Shelter (YES) and receives up to 4 million dollars
- Data from Our Health, Our Communities Health and Wellness Survey weighted and vetted and presented to network members
- Regional Facilitator honoured with King Charles Coronation medal for outstanding service to community, province and country
- \$31,000.00 distributed to key community projects through small grant initiative
- Cowichan hosts first 2 day Regional Climate Gathering
- Cowichan Vision for Wellness 2.0 developed and a plan for better supports for vulnerable community members is launched

OUR COWICHAN HAS BEEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER. HERE'S HOW

We are a conduit to Island Health, Local Governments, First Nations and Community. Now well established throughout the region our network has moved into a phase of maintaining the good work underway and finding ways to enhance and expand our impact. The Power of Networks- Relationships are the Key to Collective Impact

The Power of Networks and Collective Impact

Our Cowichan has proudly grown to more than 85 active members but we have also grown exponentially beyond this table. A network of networks has now interwoven its connections across the region and includes over 400 unique individuals and organizations. Connections are made through our Community Action Team (CAT), Eldercare Partnership in Cowichan (EPIC), Climate Action Initiative, Cowichan Youth @ Home Team, and others. Throughout 2024 OCCHN provided these members opportunities to come together to share, celebrate successful initiatives, to renew and reinvigorate collective impact and determine how we can continue to create better ways to address complex challenges as a collective.



OUR HEALTH, OUR COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS SURVEY

Building on the Cowichan Communities Health Profile, OCCHN has undertaken its largest project to date. In partnership with Island Health, OCCHN piloted the development of the Our Health, Our Communities Regional Health Survey. We were thrilled to launch the survey in July of 2023. Initial data results were shared with network members in the spring of 2024.

Why is this survey significant? Within the same meeting as the results were provided our community began finding ways to address highlighted challenges. Mental health and wellbeing is now a focus in all areas Our Cowichan touches.



EPIC -ELDERCARE PARTNERSHIP IN COWICHAN

The Community Stream of EPIC continues to thrive work together to find ways to enhance the lives of seniors. After years of working together our community partners came together for an annual day of celebrating, learning and renewed relationship development.

2024 was the launch of the regional collective impact falls prevention strategy in partnership with Island Health and numerous community partners.

Why Falls Prevention? Between 2010 and 2020 the cost of hospital admissions related to falls has been \$450,000,000 in patients 75 and older in the Island Health region. That means over 23,000 hospital admissions and 486,624 bed days resulted from falls

We want to change that!



**ONE FALL
CAN CHANGE IT ALL**



ACT NOW. LEARN HOW

COWICHAN YOUTH @ HOME

2024 was a significant year in our region for many reasons. Under the facilitation and leadership of Our Cowichan, a dedicated team of community partners have been coming together to address the dire situation relating to youth who are unhoused, vulnerable and on the streets. This team has been advocating for a safe space for youth and this year our dreams were made a reality with the announcement that up to four million dollars would be coming to our region to pilot a Youth Emergency Shelter (YES) funded by the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

A generous donation by the Mischa Weisz Foundation in the amount of \$450,000.00 combined with Coldest Night of the Year donations allowed the host agency Canadian Mental Health Association Cowichan Valley Branch to purchase a home and buy a van. In Mischa's honour the house has been named Mischa Lelum, (Mischa's Home). The Mischa Weisz Foundation has also provided funding for a meal program for at risk vulnerable youth via local outreach teams. This program has allowed critical connections to support staff while the development of the shelter is in progress. Our Community partner Cowichan Green Community has lead the way making the meals to be distributed daily.



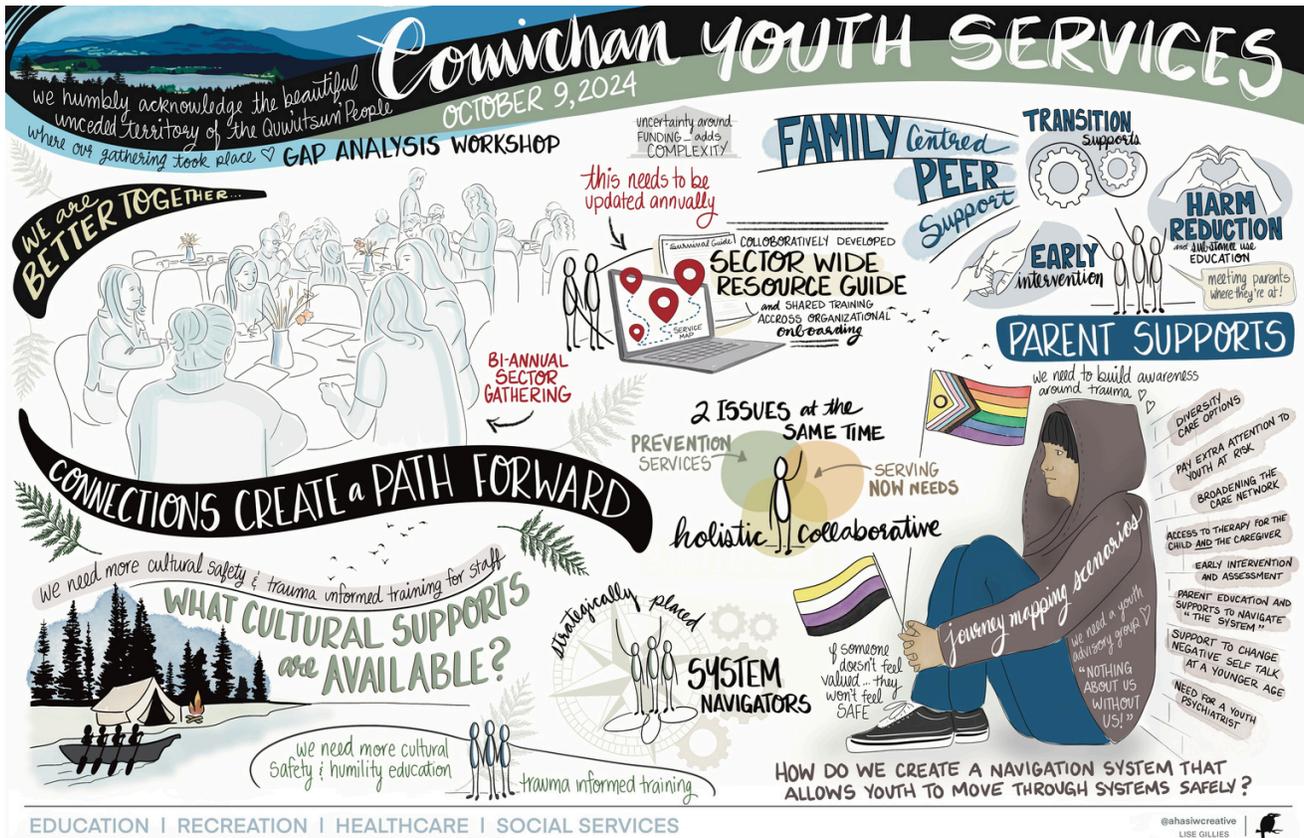
Guido Weisz and the naming of Mischa Lelum



Ministry announcements of funding and the official opening of the Youth Emergency Shelter with the house now known as Mischa Lelum, (Mischa's Home in Hulqu'iminum)



This dedicated shelter planning team includes: back-Lorena Jenkins Ministry of Children and Family Development, Douglas Hardie Island Health, Marcia Hower Ministry of Children and Family Development, Cindy Lise Our Cowichan, Colleen Davis Island Health, Catharine Berghuis Island Health, Lise Haddock Canadian Mental Health Association Cowichan Valley Branch, Jeff Rowan Cowichan Valley School District, Zoe Lauckner Cowichan Valley Youth Services, Erin Kapela Cowichan Tribes



The visual outcome of the youth services planning day. Moving forward OCCHN will support a regional collective impact initiative for youth.

Cowichan Community Action Team (CAT)

The opioid crisis has continued to decimate lives in our region.

OCCHN continues to facilitate and support the CAT and CAT Leadership table. The efforts of the CAT highlight the ongoing crisis which has enabled \$80,000.00 in funding from the Overdose Emergency Response Centre. Our CAT has grown to over 200 members who work diligently to address substance use, mental health and homelessness in our region.

The goal of the CAT is to ensure the integrated and collaborative community response and ongoing communication between service providers across the social determinants of health. Our focus for 2024 was to address stigma, misinformation and to have opportunities to learn and share with the broader community including the Better Together Community Forum.

People with lived and living experience guide all aspects of our work and are an integral part of our CAT and Our Cowichan Communities Health Network

Events included...

- Better Together Community Dialogue
- Purple Ribbon Day
- Walk With Me-Stories and Stigma





COWICHAN CLIMATE GATHERING

The Cowichan Climate Gathering was an opportunity to celebrate the remarkable climate action work in the Cowichan Region. By hosting this 2 day gathering, we aimed to strengthen the important relationships that allow us to build a stronger and more aligned collective approach to caring for our environment and increase our resiliency to the changing world. The gathering provided us an opportunity to learn, unite, and build relationships across diverse partners engaged in this important work. Key note speakers, plenary presentations, workshops, both large and small conversation sessions, display tables, and interactive art through 84,000 fishes filled the days with many opportunities to share and learn.

The event was grounded in cultural teachings and guided by Elders



This event required partners for planning and funding. Pictured here are David Reay, Fernanda Gutierrez Matos, Katie Mosewich, Cindy Lise, Sandra Thompson and Keith Lawrence. Funding support was provided by Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, the CVRD, Ministry of Environment, Island Health and the Municipality of North Cowichan.

WHAT IS NEXT FOR THE COWICHAN CLIMATE INITIATIVE?

The collective will grow into the region's next Collective Impact Initiative facilitated by OCCHN, Cowichan Valley Regional District, Social Planning Cowichan/Quwutsun Cultural Connections Society, Island Health, Thetis Island Climate Initiative, Cowichan Watershed Board, Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society



- A leadership table has been established to support further, education, awareness and planning of community events
- This gathering provided a level of hope and optimism despite potential to despair – This allows us to look and celebrate what we CAN do
- We are inspired to get more people involved
- More opportunities for learning about First Nations ways of being, traditional ways of caring for the land and how we can work together as one. This includes having First Nations guide future gatherings and climate action in Cowichan
- The desire to reach people outside of the representatives at the gathering and in the broader communities
- A desire to focus on prevention, public education



OTHER OCCHN ACTIVITIES IN 2024

- OCCHN supports Regional Youth Needs Assessment with Cowichan Women's Health Collective
- OCCHN supports Social Planning Cowichan Poverty Reduction Strategy in Lake Cowichan and Ladysmith
- OCCHN supports Community Conversations for Children and Families with Diverse Abilities
- OCCHN Facilitator is accepted into the 2024 Cohort at the United Way Public Policy Institute with a focus on the Village housing model as a pre treatment option
- OCCHN meets with Seniors Advocate
- OCCHN supports and mentors other health network development in Trail, Whistler and Saltspring Island
- OCCHN engaged in all aspects of Cowichan Homeless and Housing Coalition and supports leadership table
- OCCHN engages in community of practice with other health networks on Vancouver Island
- OCCHN works with community partners in efforts to establish an extreme weather shelter and extreme weather response for heat and cold

OUR COWICHAN REGIONAL FACILITATOR RECEIVES KING CHARLES CORONATION MEDAL FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY, PROVINCE AND COUNTRY

Cindy Lise has been the facilitator at the helm of Our Cowichan since 2012 and is recognized for her commitment and for working with many community partners to enhance the wellbeing of all people and places in the Cowichan region.



SMALL GRANTS INITIATIVE

This was an exciting year as OCCHN was able to host the small grant initiative. Small grants of up to \$2,000.00 may not seem like a lot but in fact have created some of our most impactful initiatives that have leveraged millions of dollars in community resources. We have now allocated a total of \$188,500.00 in grants over the past decade. In 2024 OCCHN contributed \$31,000.00 to local projects that included:

- Cowichan Maternity Clinic- Meals for moms and babies
- Cowichan Caregivers Support Society- Pet Companion Project
- Parent Child Mother Goose Cowichan- Programming training and support
- Clements Centre Society- Outreach to Penelakut Island
- Vancouver Island Library -Fall Food Forum
- Cowichan Women's Health Collective- Cowichan Youth Needs Assessment
- Cowichan Valley Basket Society- Infant and Child Supports
- Cowichan Lake Community Services- Community Mural Project
- Cowichan Women Against Violence- PEACE Child and Youth Counselling
- Chemainus Community Schools Association- Mental Health for Children
- Cowichan Intercultural Society- New Comers and Driving Program
- Canadian Mental Health Association- Healthy Lifestyles at the Youth Program
- Literacy Now Cowichan- A Photo and A Story
- Cowichan Community Workshop Co-op- Older Adults Meet Up Program
- Cowichan Valley Youth Services- Youth Self Care Pro D Days



Companion Pets Small Grant Project brings comfort to seniors. This project is so successful other funders are coming on board to grow the impact and the number of pets available in our region

OUR IMPACT BEYOND DATA

EACH YEAR COMMUNITY PARTNERS REFLECT ON THE IMPACT THAT OCCHN HAS ON THEIR ORGANIZATION OR WORK IN THE COMMUNITY. HERE'S WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY.

"I would like to say how much I appreciate you, (Cindy), and the role you have played in supporting our work in Cowichan. You really are a marvelous example of someone who decides they are going to roll up their sleeves and do something about these complex problems! Really, your energy and facilitation of these various groups has been so critical to any of the gains that we are making for youth services."

- Douglas Hardie Island Health Discovery Youth and Family Substance Use Services

"We are grateful for the support of the Cowichan Community Health Network, without which our Community Action Team may not exist. The facilitation for our CAT, provided by Cindy Lise, has been invaluable. Data collected through OCCHN has greatly benefited our team as we advocate for services. Additionally, the connections we've made at OCCHN meetings have increased collaboration, partnerships, and opportunities for our Peer members—individuals with lived and living experience of substance use. Together, we have made significant improvements in promoting health and well-being within our community. We are truly appreciative of the Cowichan Community Health Network and the active role it plays in our community".

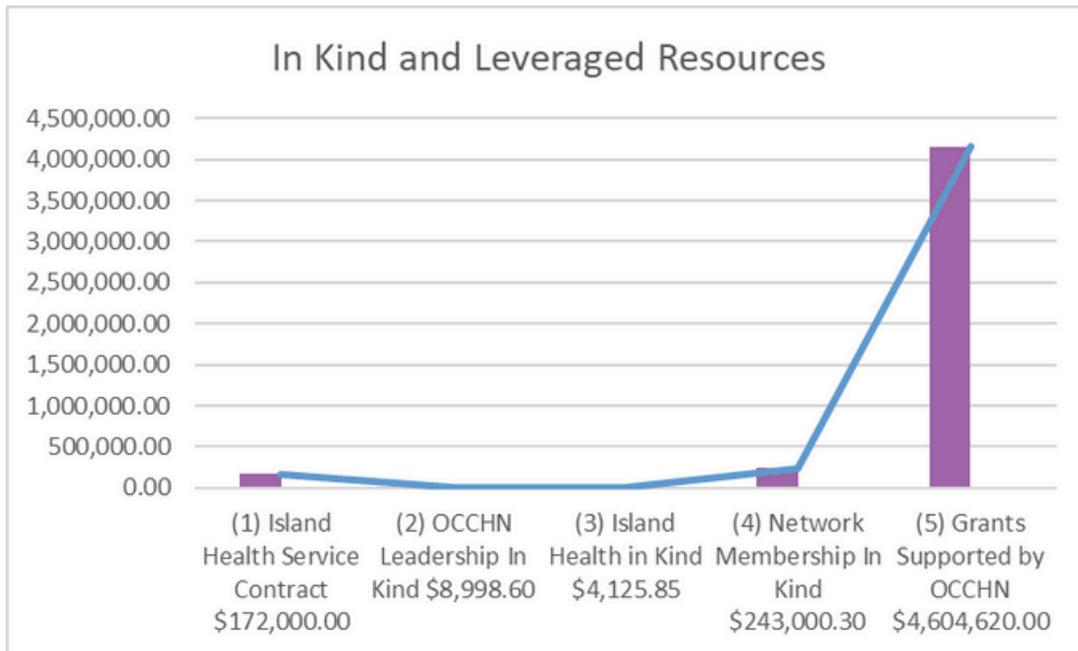
-Cailey Foster Cowichan Community Action Team

"For years, Our Cowichan Communities Health Network has been a vital partner in the work we do at Clements Centre, providing programs and services to individuals with developmental disabilities throughout the Cowichan Region. This past year, OCCHN made it possible for us to increase our visits to Penelakut Island, strengthening our connections there and expanding our services to include infant and child development programs. Prior to that, the Network helped us acquire "Moe the Mouse" animal sound kits to enhance our speech and language program. We also cannot thank OCCHN enough for their involvement in in our Community Led Collaboration series, the Youth Services Gap Analysis, and housing initiatives for Cowichan. We appreciate having such an impactful ally."

-Dominic Rockall, CEO Clements Centre

2024 Contributions of volunteers and in kind services have great value for Our Cowichan.
By working together we are more effective.

Collective Impact continues to leverage the resources we are able to bring to our region with over million dollars being allocated to our region.



What Makes Our Network So Effective?

The findings of evaluation of networks on Vancouver Island strongly indicate that the existence of health networks such as Our Cowichan increased community capacity to address social determinants of health in a number of significant ways. Our network has now been in operation for over 14 years and remains an integral backbone that acts as a conduit for learning, data collection and analysis, planning, regional communication, collective impact and networking. There was agreement that the outcomes of many of the initiatives would not have experienced the same level of success without the network functioning as the common sustaining thread. The ability of Our Cowichan to work with community partners for collective planning and grant writing has resulted in resources coming to our region in ways we have not experienced before. Duplication of resources are diminishing and joint initiatives are demonstrating success with organizations aligning efforts and providing resources or sharing the lead.

Our Cowichan Communities Health Network Financials 2024	
Account Description	2024 Expenditures
Provincial Conditional	\$172,000.00
General	\$4,000.00
Community Health Survey	\$36,442.00
Total Grants	\$212,442.00
Contract Services Survey	\$10,094.08
Consultants	\$0
Training And Development	\$0
Contract Services - Lead	\$91,182.71
Contract Services- Support	\$1,785.00
Alloc- General Government	\$2,521.00
Meeting Expenses	\$9,337.63
Office Supplies	\$493.66
Grant In Aid	\$31,000.00
Contingency	\$0
Community Forums	
Rentals – Building	\$0
Communications	
Community Information	\$0
Web Page	\$1,000.00
Total Operating Expenses	\$147,414.08

*remaining funds are carried over to 2025

Partnerships that Make Our Cowichan Possible

Health Networks such as OCCHN build the foundation of a strong community-based approach to challenges we all share. Intersectoral collective action via the Health Network is working and we are busier than ever! We thank Island Health for the funding that allows us to engage in this important effort as well as the Cowichan Valley Regional District for their contribution by providing administration and staff support. We are also grateful for the opportunity to work with multiple sectors within Island Health from Executive, to Directors to talented employees at all levels in ways we have never done before. Success does not just happen so we recognize the thousands of hours of volunteer time of Co-Chairs, Leadership Committee Members, Task Force Members, and the numerous committee members that are committed to this work and who are the core drivers of OCCHN.

Island Health Provides Service Grant

We are grateful that a three year service contract was reached with Island Health providing our region the resources to maintain our momentum, including wages for the facilitator and funds to continue to address the social determinants of health and improve health outcomes in our region. Our contract will take us to March 31, 2027

